

CRESTON ADVISORY BODY

Minutes for

Wednesday, June 19, 2019

7:00 – 9:30 PM

- 1) Call to Order – Flag Salute 7:05 pm
Members present: Kurt Almond, Jan Morris, Susan Souza, Tom Edel, Roy Barba, Sheila Lyons and Steve Almond. Missing: Geraldine May of Huer Huero Rd.
- 2) Minutes of the previous meeting(s)
February 20 minutes approval unanimously after motion made by Kurt, 2nd by Susan and April 17, 2019 minutes approved unanimously after motion by Kurt, 2nd by Roy
- 3) Public and/or CAB Member Comments for Items NOT on the agenda
 - Jim Wortner of the public announced that there is a SLO Cannabis petition that he would like everyone to sign to oppose current standards and implement some new ones
 - Susan S. mentioned the trash at the PO, a mattress is there now – no real way to stop it apparently
 - Sheila announced that Steve A. has obtained the 5 signatures needed on a CAB Conditions of Service form and therefore will be joining us as the representative for Rocky Canyon Rd/Hwy 229, replacing Tim Long who is in the process of moving. We welcome Steve!!!
- 4) Public Safety – Cal Fire, Sheriff, CHP, etc. - Deputy John McKenney
 - Deputy updated us on recent crime/reports in Creston. Report of bullets flying past a couple sitting on their front porch off of Hwy 58. Sheriff investigated and found someone shooting a 357 Magnum unsafely obviously.
- 5) Fifth District Supervisor Report – Supervisor Debbie Arnold
 - Chicago Grade closing on Sundays but will have two lines on Saturdays to make up for it.
 - Christian Thrift store in Atascadero collects mattresses in their back parking lot
 - SLO County budget approved - \$633M.
 - Supervisor Arnold continues to push for maintaining our road index at >65 score.
 - County Clerk's office in Atascadero which has been only open on Tues/Thurs will now open for 5 days a week again.
 - B of S yesterday – Implemented a moratorium on hemp growing in the County. It is a state food crop. 25 Counties have a moratorium and now SLO has joined the rest.
 - Discussion regarding final chapters of GSP which are on-line for review. The 1:1 water offset will be extended. Sheila asked if crop duty factors will be used for determining future water usage on crops instead of the inflated historical usages. Supervisor Arnold said, no, crop duty factors will not be used but didn't have a good explanation of why. Sheila said using historical pumping numbers puts those who have abused in the past will continue to do so, taking advantage with the system being considering for water allocation, and those who have conserved will be penalized. There are ~460K acres over the PR Basin and the estimated perennial yield is now set at around 61K AF/yr. Still need a plan for enforcement of water usage. Cost/AF expected to increase to accommodate enforcement necessary.
 - Kurt had a question regarding set backs for cannabis and hemp. Shouldn't there be set backs for both instead of just hemp setbacks for cannabis?
- 6) Planning Department–Project Referrals/Other permits in our area and an update on what is happening in the department – Megan Martin, County Planner -
 - a. **Geneseo Road Bridge Project** – Matt Reinhart, Public Works Department Bridge Project Manager, gave an update on construction to begin this summer, 2019: Project is located at the Arizona creek crossing on Geneseo Road, between Creston and Cass

Winery. The newly constructed bridge will be 200 feet long and will be closed to through traffic while under construction which is expected to be July to Dec. Signs will be on Union and Chester Road mid-July and the project will be required to be out of the creek by December. It is scheduled to be completed by February next year. There will not be a side path for horses/bikes. They will have to cross on the bridge which is expected to be plenty wide for this purpose.

b. Megan Martin, County P & B Dept. liaison to CAB – project update

- Megan Martin, the supervisor from the Planning & Building Department has oversight for the section of the dept that advises the supervisors regarding cannabis ordinance issues and for the processing of cannabis projects. Megan gave an update on all of the projects in the greater Creston area:

Webster Road (Webster Road LLC from April CAB): Project is on “Information Hold”. Applicant is doing a complete re-design of the project - a back to the drawing board. Seeking to do only indoor cultivation and eliminate outdoor. This application is still in progress and may return to CAB due to the significant changes in the application expected.

North Ryan Road: (from March CAB) Also on “Information Hold”. A botanical/biologics environmental study is being conducted to assess impacts. Project has to reduce outside canopy proposal from the original 7-10 acres to 3 acres. Application is still in progress.

Ryan Road (McCallister) project has been withdrawn by the applicants.

Rancho Loma Linda (Martinelli) project also requested to withdraw its application as of Wednesday morning.

Creston Oaks (Rumsey): Applicant is pursuing lot line adjustments, as they own multiple properties in that development and are asking for two indoor cannabis grows. Creston Oaks is a legal subdivision complete with tract maps that may contain restrictions on usage. Project needs to be site visited by CAB board member and will likely be reviewed at CAB at the July meeting.

Another project operating under the CCM (grandfathered approval from medical marijuana grows) in Rocky Canyon is currently undergoing environmental reviews.

80 O'Donovan Way project letter was sent to surrounding neighbors but no application has been received by the Planning Department, or hence CAB. This location had an illegal cannabis grow and was shut down by Deputy Sheriff John McKenney. It was noted during the discussion that due to this illegal grow, an approval of this application is unlikely.

An Important note: Two potential Creston area cannabis projects of the original 8 have been withdrawn by the applicants. A third was shut down due to an illegal grow and is unlikely to qualify for a future permit. This point was cheered by all members of the public present.

The assessment of “community compatibility” continues to be a major topic at CAB and needs further refinement. The safety, health, wellbeing of rural residential properties located in primarily agriculturally zoned community is of utmost importance. Clean odor free air, and safe and abundant drinking water are at the top of the list. Eliminating the potential for increased crime and keeping the community “rural” rather than commercial with manufacturing that belongs in a more urban/industrial setting is also important. Disturbance of our scenic surroundings and introducing liability issues for project neighbors are additional factors to be considered.

The Board of Supervisors accepted the Planning Department and Planning Commission Phase 2 ordinance changes but did not add the proposed changes that have been suggested by many in rural residential agricultural communities across SLO county. It is believed that these suggestions and others put forth by CAB will be considered in Phase 3 which is being accelerated by Debbie Arnold. This includes...

- Indoor grow requirements
- Sensitive receptor/ residence setbacks and restrictions/that is: including residences as sensitive receptors
- "Three strikes" policy (for multiple offenders)
- Additional considerations for setbacks and distance definitions
- Proximity overlays of multiple cannabis projects in an area
- Relook at infusion manufacturing (Infusion is benign - like adding chocolate syrup to cookie dough. Its the chemical extraction process on residential ag lands using ethanol and liquid carbon dioxide under high pressures that can cause fires and explosions. We will need to explain why this is chemical industrial manufacturing and not “farm to table”.)
- Recommend removal of allowance of Micro-business license on Ag land.
- No cannabis projects on private roads unless there is a road maintenance agreement demonstrating that other road residents are covered for potential liabilities that may arise.
- Not allowing cannabis projects to purchase water up front (adding more stress to the PR Basin by adding new water pumping and further depleting the PR Basin) and requiring them to do as existing agriculture must, offset their own usage.
- Consider requiring a new zoning category for “industrial” pursuits on agricultural lands.

7) New Business -

- Cannabis Check List – What have we learned from the review of the previous cannabis projects? We want to use the same check list for all types of projects that will be on the website.
- Do we want to create a check list specifically for cannabis projects? Is our general check list adequate? Use the same list for all

Discussion amongst CAB members concluded that we would prefer to have only one checklist but we will discuss potential changes to our current Community Compatibility Checklist to make it more inclusive of issues related to cannabis projects. This topic will be on the July CAB agenda for further discussion.

- Do we want to amend the Creston Village Plan to forbid cannabis at least where we can? Put the review list on line to let the community check out the plan, then respond with ideas., take a look, give input. We need a link to the Creston Village Plan on our CAB website.

Megan Martin from County Planning and Building gave us information on other County Community Plans and their progress. These plans only get updated when the County General Plan (as part of the Land Use and Circulation Element Part I, Framework for Planning) gets updated. Los Osos has had a plan in the works for 25 years, and Avila for 5 years, and they are still not part of the County General Plan.

Despite the hurdles, the CAB members felt that we should take a look at what can be done as far as modification of the Creston Village Plan which is currently very minimalistic. Addition of conditions for limiting undesirable projects, such as industrial manufacturing, within the VRL or within a reasonable distance from the VRL are worth considering. All members will read the current plan and try to identify what can be changed to accommodate the thinking on cannabis projects in particular. We will place this topic on the July agenda for further consideration.

- Do we want to coordinate with the other CAC's to send a message to the County regarding cannabis projects? Use a unified message, connect with the Templeton area advisor group, develop a separate committee.

A representative of the TAAG had been in touch with Sheila prior to our meeting tonight. His name is Murray Powell and he was present this evening. He spoke briefly on the idea of the SLO County CAC's delivering a unified message to the County regarding cannabis projects. Sheila asked if any of the CAB members would be willing to attend separate meetings on behalf of CAB and Tom Edel and Steve Almond volunteered.

- Other cannabis project considerations:
 - Need a list of all referrals and their current status - some projects get modified and/or approved after CAB has reviewed them and made recommendations but then we never learn the outcome. There is no routine notification to CAB.
 - 56% of all applications here, 28% in South County, Nipomo

8) Unfinished/ Continuing Business (15 minutes) –

- a. Paso Basin Cooperative Committee – Report from April 24th meeting???
Sign up to be notified through Angel Ruberto – SLO County Public Works – aruberto@co.slo.ca.us or view water information in general at <http://www.slocountywater.org/sgma> We all need to check out information on report.

Final Chapters of the GSP are on-line and available for comment. Comment period will close July 1 before our next meeting so all CAB members should take a look soon.

- b. Creston Welcome Wagon/NewComers Packet – Sheila makes an effort to involve the Four H, Rodeo committee, the Pool Fund, Women’s Club as well as CAB. Mike Aarons designed and ordered business cards for CAB’s use as part of this effort and for us to distribute individually. It was noted that now we have a new website our URL has changed from crestonadvisorybody.net to crestonadvisorybody.com so the cards need to be modified before distribution to be accurate.

9) Committee Reports/Next Steps–

- a. By-Laws – Sheila L., & Jan M. – nothing to report
- b. Elections – Sheila L. & Susan S. Judy Blankenship (public) - nothing to report
- c. Public Information – Roy, Tom, Mike & Kurt – Kurt gave a Website update – Still in the process of moving archived information over on to the new website. Kurt will post agendas on the website prior to the meeting when he receives them from Sheila

10) Treasurer’s Report – Check paid to church for \$700, Balance: \$99.97. Will reapply to county.

11) Future Agenda Items:

- Invite Highway Patrol to review safety on Highway 41, Creston Rd and La Panza
- Talk to Cal Fire. Ask them to attend CAB. Ask them if they cite property owners for not mowing along roadsides.
- Caltrans could help redesign dangerous intersections

Adjournment 9:30 p.m.